

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03
NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-15
AID-05 COME-00 EB-07 FRB-01 TRSE-00 XMB-04 OPIC-06
CIEP-02 LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01 /100 W
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R 191656Z JAN 77
FM AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8850
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
AMEMBASSY DUBLIN
UDKGPQ/AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE 1185
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
TEN/USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

UNCLAS BRUSSELS 0531

E.O. 11652:N/A
TAGS:ELAB,PINT,BE
SUBJECT: MOC REJECTS GOVERNMENT ECONOMIC/SOCIAL POLICY

1. THE CHRISTIAN WORKERS MOVEMENT (MOC),CONSTITUTING THE LEFT WING OF THE SOCIAL CHRISTIAN PARTY (PSC),SHARPLY CHALLENGED GOVERNMENT ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL POLICIES AT ITS CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEETING IN BRUSSELS JANUARY 15.THE MOC LEADERSHIP REJECTED WHAT IT LABELLED " THE EMPLOYER-GOVERNMENT THESIS" LAYING PRINCIPAL BLAME FOR BELGIUM'S ECONOMIC SLUMP AND UNEMPLOYMENT ON HIGH LABOR COSTS,WAGE INDEXATION,AND EXCESSIVELY COSTLY SOCIAL PROGRAMS. MOC PROPOSED INSTEAD A RADICAL NEW APPROACH TO ECONOMIC RECOVERY FEATURING, INTER ALIA,A REDUCTION OF THE WORK WEEK TO 36 HOURS. DIRECT PUBLIC INVESTMENT IN INDUSTRY,SUPPRESSION OF UNCLASSIFIED

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INCOME TAX FRAUD(ESTIMATED AT DOLS 3 - DOLS 3.5 BILLION A YEAR), AND AN INVENTORY OF PRIVATE FORTUNES.

2. SECRETARY GENERAL D'HONDT OF THE CHRISTIAN TRADE UNION FEDERATION (CSC)WAS A PRINCIPAL SPEAKER IN THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE DEBATE.HE DECLARED THE TINDEMANS GOVERNMENT HAD SHOWN ITSELF UNABLE TO EFFECT THE

FUNDAMENTAL STRUCTURAL CHANGES WHICH HE SAID WERE
NECESSARY TO OVERCOME THE UNEMPLOYMENT PROBLEM.
D'HONDT CALLED FOR A REDUCTION OF THE WORK WEEK AND
THE VIGOROUS USE OF EVERY OTHER MEANS (INCLUDING
PLANT OCCUPATIONS AND EXPERIMENTS IN SELF-MANAGEMENT)
NECESSARY TO PRESERVE EXISTING JOBS.

3.MOC MINISTER OF LABOR CALIFICE,WHO WAS PRESENT
AT THE MEETING,REMAINED SILENT THROUGHOUT.

4.COMMENT: MOC,A LOOSE GROUPING OF FRANCPHONE
CHRISTIAN TRADE UNIONISTS,MUTUALITE ACTIVISTS,
WOMEN AND YOUNG WORKERS,REPRESENTS A SIGNIFICANT
PROPORTION OF SOCIAL CHRISTIAN PARTY STRENGTH IN
WALLONIA AND THE PRINCIPAL CHALLENGE TO SOCIALIST
PARTY DOMINATION OF WALLOON INDUSTRIAL DISTRICTS.C
IN THIS WINTER OF BELGIAN DISCONTENT MOC AND LIKEMINDED
SOCIAL CHRISTIANS HAVE ASSAILED THE
GOVERNMENT'S DO-LITTLE RECOVERY POLICY MORE VIGOROUSLY
THAN HAVE THE OPPOSITION SOCIALISTS.THIS MILITANCE
(WITH WHICH LABOR MINISTER CALIFICE WARMLY SYMPATHIZES)
IS BEGINNING TO POSE A REAL PROBLEM FOR PSC - AND
PERHAPS FOR THE TINDEMANS GOVERNMENT AS A WHOLE.TEN
OF THE 22 PSC DEPUTIES IN THE HOUSE ARE MOC MEMBERS AND
THUS MORALLY BOUND TO OPPOSE KEY POLICIES OF THE
GOVERNMENT THEY SUPPORT.WITH HIS SLIM MAJORITY
TINDEMANS CANNOT STAND ANY SIGNIFICANT NUMBER OF
DEFECTIONS FROM HIS RANKS - CERTAINLY NOT AS MANY AS
TEN PSC DEPUTIES.

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